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Abstract: Recently, I received from home several clippings from a New York newspaper. They set me to thinking that soon many of our seniors, graduates- about-to-be, will be taking up their life work and residence in the great metropolis to the east. And for those who are still undecided whether they might like life in New York, perhaps a few impressions of one who has lived there may be of some value.

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NEW YORK

By MILLARD ROSENFELD, E.E. 4

EDITOR'S NOTE.—This is one of the articles that was submitted in the recent *Eta Kappa Nu*, honorary electrical engineering fraternity, magazine article competition.

Recently, I received from home several clippings from a New York newspaper. They set me to thinking that soon many of our seniors, graduates-about-to-be, will be taking up their life work and residence in the great metropolis to the east. And for those who are still undecided whether they might like life in New York, perhaps a few impressions of one who has lived there may be of some value. I have worked in New York for three years, and have visited my family there at intervals through the thirteen years of their residence in the city.

Manhattan is a densely populated pile of bluff and rock which sits down between two rivers, and from which the commerce of the world radiates. Thirty-some odd dollars from the campus, if one does not ride in Yellow Cabs, and a nickel on the subway from Coney Island, it is the lode-stone that attracts the talent of the world. Here life is faster, competition keener, and the rewards greater for those who are capable and can put up the front. One is taken at his own valuation until found wanting. New York suffers from an inferiority complex, which is exhibited by its desire to impress everyone else with its importance, and the willingness to believe that anyone who makes a strong bluff has the ability that it lacks. Many of the outstanding successes there are made by men who came from other places.

Here in our engineering classes, we learn and respect our standards of measure. New York has improved on this, and has set up one standard to which all others, physical, mental, and moral, are referred. It is the unit of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in Gotham. Possessed in sufficient quantity, it will give one social standing, freedom from jury service and the annoyance of traffic tags, and will even insure one's unborn grandchildren a place on the waiting list at Princeton. Not to mention the servile respect of one's associates, fellow-workers, and the vast army that lives by service of one kind or another.

New York has, in spite of the reputation of Tammany Hall throughout the country, one of the best and most efficient of city governments. Graft and corruption there is in plenty; but, compared to the opportunities offered by such a large community, it is reasonably well run. Besides the best-dressed mayor and the finest police department, there are thousands of efficient and, at times, even courteous city employees.

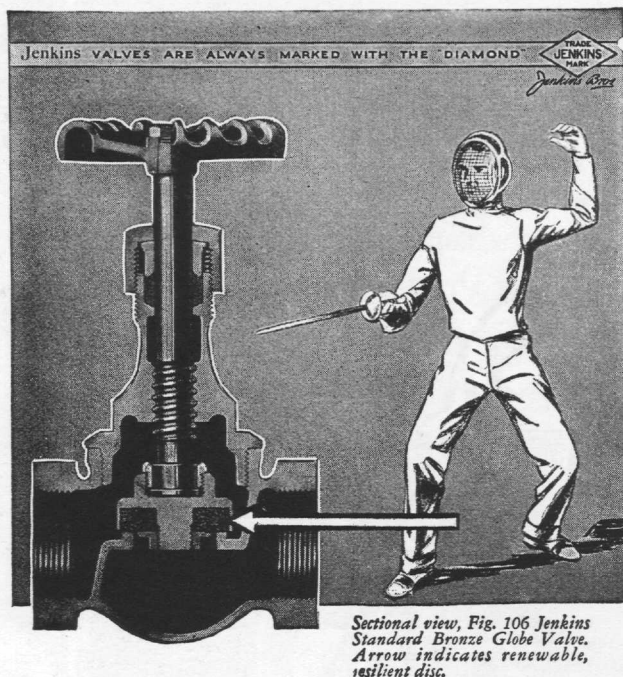
There are many features of interest, but one does not get to know them until a visitor comes to the city and must be shown around. If one inquires of a passerby the location of some point, he never knows, but often pretends to, since a New Yorker will never admit ignorance on any subject, and directs the inquirer in the opposite direction. No New Yorker was ever known to give a correct direction. The only safe way is to ask a policeman, for giving directions is, in fact, one of his chief duties, and is a requisite for

the job. But to return to the subject of interesting features, there are three that always impressed me above all others. The first is the lights on Broadway, the magnificence of which has been heralded to all parts of the world. The second is the nine taxis, all carrying passengers, out of every ten cars passing a given point down town at 11 P. M., just after the theaters have let out. The third is the backdrop of the theater of Manhattan, as the curtain descends after the first act, when the day's work is done and the office workers are preparing for their daily battle of the subways. Picture yourself on a subway train, coming out of its hole for the moment as it speeds across the Williamsburg Bridge, going from Brooklyn to downtown Manhattan. Dusk is falling, and across the open water of the dark river one sees the thousands of windows in the office buildings, towering into the low-hanging darkness, with yellow light streaming from each window. Then the train plunges into the tunnel on the other side of the bridge, the curtain has fallen, and it will be several hours until it rises again for the second act, the opening of the night life along the bright way.

One could walk down Broadway in his bare feet without getting a second glance. It is the paradise of all faddist societies, sects, and organizations. One sees the customs of almost every country on the face of the globe, each in its own community, and hears all the languages of earth spoken. Especially common is that unpleasant guttural known as "Yiddish" that is affected by the inhabitants of the Bronx and Washington Heights. For the information of those that have never heard it, it is a mixture of German, Russian, and Milt Gross, and is spoken and understood by a large percentage of New York's several million Jews. Turbaned Indians, Russians, Jews with shiny black coats and long beards to match, Chinese, Italians, Irish, all ebb and flow, without exciting wonder or comment, in the great stream of humanity. Restless, hurrying, lingering in eddies, only to move out again into the swift currents, New York runs clocklike, twenty-four hours a day.

No description of Gotham is complete without mentioning that greatest of all its wonders, the SUBWAY. Mechanically near to perfection, its excellence is overshadowed by the infinite resilience to all its terrors of the people who ride in it, twice a day, six days a week, fifty weeks a year. If cattle were given such accommodations on their way to slaughter, it would bring down the censure of the whole country. Here two-hundred-pound guards use football tactics in their effort to fill up each cubic foot of space with its maximum content of humanity, and who cares if we are compressed out of all natural shape to conform to the dimensions of the available space and the bulk of the other passengers? Five cents buys the longest and most uncomfortable ride in the world. During the rush hour, one is lucky if he can man-

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NEW YORK

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age to get space enough to plant both feet firmly on the floor, and keep his body in a position other than that resembling the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The one ray of sunshine, if such a figure may be permitted to be applied to a place where the sun never shines, is the ability of men of all kinds and descriptions to act like gentlemen. Men and women get seats when they can, and stand when they cannot, share and share alike, but both are quick to help the old lady, or the woman with a baby, or anyone else who obviously needs assistance.

The reputed coldness of the New Yorker is merely a matter of self-protection. With so many fakes and thieves around, one must be very circumspect in one's relations with strangers. Race and religious prejudice are at a minimum, an obvious result of the mixture of races that make up the population. One may live for years in the same apartment house, and never get beyond a nodding acquaintance with one's neighbors. Friends, by some unkind quirk of fate, seem always to live on the other side of the city. Since there is no way of checking up on the habits and occupations of one's neighbors, this distant attitude is only a matter of safety.

After several years in New York, you will either think that there is no other place to compare to it, or will hate it thoroughly. Conveniences it has beyond all other places, and inconveniences just as great. All the products, all the amusements of the world, are there, waiting for the purchaser. But all the people in the world seem to be there at the same time, and in the same place that you want to reach. New York is perhaps quicker to recognize real ability than any other place, and quicker to forget, too. The women there, all of them considered as a group, are the best groomed in the world. In this part of the country, only Euclid Avenue in Cleveland is even faintly reminiscent of Fifth Avenue, where the exclusive jewelry store or dress establishment finds itself sandwiched between an Automat on one side and a Woolworth store on the other.

There is found more rush and hurry, more light and noise, more time to watch the window demonstrator or the street faker with his dancing doll, and less leisure to rest and think, than elsewhere. Everything is bigger and better and more of it. Noise of riveters, blasting of rock foundation to make the city even bigger and more noisy, auto horns and screaming brakes, the whistles of traffic cops and the clang of street-car bells, all go to make up the daily symphony that becomes less but never ceases, even in the small hours of the morning. Quiet is only comparative there. Home is a place to change clothes, to eat an occasional meal—and perhaps to sleep the few hours between the time of arrival after an evening of pleasure and the sound of the alarm clock, which must be set early to allow time for the long ride on the subway or the suburban train. New York will not ask your race or creed. It will ask how much money you can spend. You will love it or hate it, enjoy it or endure it, my classmates that are going there; but, either way, it will take you and make you over into its own conception of a man.